

CA24N  
23  
-63M22

SCIENCE & MEDICINE DEPT.

The 1964-65 session of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario has been a busy one for the Government in the field of health care. The Government has been working to improve the health care system and to ensure that the needs of the people are met. The Government has been working to improve the health care system and to ensure that the needs of the people are met.

A BRIEF

TO

THE MEDICAL SERVICES INSURANCE ENQUIRY


PRESENTED BY

THE REGISTERED NURSES' ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

TORONTO

JANUARY, 1964

The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) is a professional organization representing registered nurses in Ontario. The RNAO is committed to the highest standards of nursing practice and to the advancement of the nursing profession. The RNAO is also committed to the improvement of the health care system and to the provision of high quality nursing care to the people of Ontario.



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2025 with funding from  
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761120641899>

## RNAO BRIEF TO THE MEDICAL SERVICES INSURANCE ENQUIRY

1. The RNAO concurs in the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to obtain the best in the protection and, where necessary, the restoration of health irrespective of his economic status and that this care be available through insured services in hospitals and in the home. It was, therefore, recommended: That complete health care be made available to all Canadians regardless of their financial condition.\*
2. The Association supports "Schedule A" in the Act Respecting Medical Services Insurance and believes that preventive services should be included. Such service should improve health and reduce the need for treatment with resulting reductions in the medical and nursing services required.

We would, therefore, recommend that periodic health examinations be included in insured services, particularly for children and persons in the older age group.

3. Extension of health services of any kind will have a direct impact on nursing as nurses are critically involved in any plan for the prevention of illness and its treatment.
4. The demand for, and the supply of, nurses has increased steadily during the last 20 years but recent expansion of health services has accelerated the demand until today it exceeds the supply and it is expected that further prepaid services will push this demand to the point where safe nursing care will be difficult to maintain.

---

\* RNAO Brief to the Royal Commission on Health Services - page 4.



5. The main factors contributing to the increase in demand include:

- a. advancements in medical science, with improved treatment and the lengthening life span;
- b. a higher standard of living with greater ability to pay for services;
- c. increased public awareness of health and medical care with greater demand for health service;
- d. health insurance plans with an increasing amount of care given in the hospital, whereas formerly many patients remained at home where the family was able to give some of the nursing care they required.

6. Ontario has the highest ratio of registered nurses to population in Canada and although this ratio has increased in the last ten years\* we hear constantly of the shortage of nurses with many vacancies reported in hospitals and other health agencies.

7. Some of the problems facing nurses today include:

- (1) Activities formerly carried out by doctors and the performance of complex procedures of treatment, have now become part of the nurse's responsibility;
- (2) The nurse has been performing a variety of activities which are not nursing but which are essential to the patient's care. Although there has been some lessening of this in recent years, a fair amount of the nurse's time is still being spent in work that is not nursing;\*\*

---

\* Brief to the Royal Commission on Health Services - appendix XIII page 32.

\*\* Brief to the Royal Commission on Health Services - page 14 paragraph 34.

Note: A Study of the Utilization of Nurses is being made by the Royal Commission.



(3) The increase in the number of auxiliary personnel providing some form of nursing service for the patient - nursing assistants, orderlies, attendants and ward aides - is creating problems of organization, co-ordination and supervision, which are the responsibility of the nursing department;

(4) The economic position of nurses has lagged behind that of other comparable groups in the community. While higher salaries have been given for positions in administration and education, that of the general practitioner of nursing has stayed within a narrow range deterring the nurse with special preparation from remaining in the area of direct patient care.

8. We believe these problems can be solved. If present conditions are to be improved and future needs within health services insurance are to be met, nurses must be involved to a greater extent in planning. It is only in an environment where joint planning is encouraged and high standards maintained that nursing will be able to truly fulfill its role.

We would, therefore, recommend that nurses be included in any planning which concerns the provision of health services in the hospital and community.

9. Recognizing the need for leadership in nursing, it is generally considered that approximately 25% of nurses should graduate from university schools of nursing. If the number of students entering university is to increase from the present 5%, financial assistance will be required to expand present facilities and establish new programmes.



10. With the intake of students in schools of nursing in Ontario approximately 3,000 in 1964 and assuming that an additional 20% or 600 of these students should be entering university schools of nursing, provision should be made for one-third of these students (200) to obtain financial assistance.\* Based on the present average yearly amount of \$500. per student\* this would approximate \$100,000. in the initial year.

We would, therefore, recommend that financial assistance be made available to Ontario universities for:

- (a) enlargement of present programmes of nursing education and the establishment of new programmes;
- (b) bursaries for students.

11. In an attempt to further interest recruits in nursing, the Association has made recommendations with regard to nursing education\*\* and is now co-operating in the development of an experimental course in nursing within general education at the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute.

12. The Association appreciates the opportunity to present its views to the Medical Services Insurance Enquiry, and wishes to assist in promoting the finest possible health care for the people of Ontario.

---

\* 33.6% of all students in the University of Toronto received financial aid during the year 1962-63.

The average amount of aid from all sources was \$514. per student.

\*\* Brief to the Royal Commission on Health Services - pages 7-12.

10. With the intake of students in schools of nursing in Ontario approximately 3,000 in 1964 and assuming that an additional 100 or 200 of these students should be trained in the University schools of nursing, provision should be made for one-third of these students (100) to obtain financial assistance. Based on the present average yearly income of \$1,000 per student, this would equate to \$100,000 in the first year.

We would, therefore, recommend that financial assistance be made available to certain University students.

- (a) enlargement of present programs of nursing education and the establishment of new programs;
- (b) bursaries for students.

11. In an attempt to further foster research in nursing, the Association has made recommendations with regard to nursing education and is now co-operating in the development of an educational center in nursing with general education at the Queen's University, Kingston.

12. The Association appreciates the opportunity to present its views to the Medical Services Insurance Board, and wishes to assist in promoting the finest possible health care for the people of Ontario.

13. A list of all students in the University of Toronto receiving financial aid during the year 1963-64. The average amount of aid from all sources was \$115 per student.

14. Report to the Royal Commission on Health Services - pages 112-113.